

Religion: not just an institution

Times have changed over the past few decades, specifically with religion. I had thought to have the title of this article say that religion was not an institution. However, after looking up Webster's definition, I found that one meaning was couched around being institutional.

I am alive in a religious time that's exciting for me. I have been affiliated with the Church of Christ all of my life. Throughout my life at home, my views of "church" were the practices we did on Sundays and Wednesdays. A typical Sunday morning would look like this: go to Bible class, and then sit in the auditorium for about an hour while listening to songs, listening to prayers, watching people take the Lord's Supper, listening to the preacher talk over my head, and then going home.

We would come back on Sunday night to sing some more songs, hear another sermon, and go home. A typical Wednesday was going to Bible class and then everyone coming together for the last few minutes to sing a few songs.

Your story may differ a bit depending on your experience. However, the institutionalized part of religion is a turn off to many. It is for me, too. Religion is not about a "check off list." Religion is not "church," though the church is religious.

I have refocused my view of religion. It is not an institutionalized view, but rather an exciting opportunity to team up with my Creator every day. Everywhere I go, every person I meet, and every action I take should reflect the appreciation for my salvation and wanting others to be a part of that as well.

I am not trying to attract someone to "church," the institutionalized part of religion. However, I am trying to attract someone to a challenging and rewarding way of life.

For those who have made reli-



Jarrod Spencer

• From the Pulpit

gion institutional, that is a huge mistake. It has led so many people down a dreary and exhausting path. It takes all the joy out of it.

The little bit of time you spend in a building on a Sunday is not geared to give you "brownie points" to God. In fact, the Bible speaks against the institutionalized part of religion.

Jesus came to show that religion wasn't simply offering sacrifices, because God wanted their hearts more than sacrifices. So, getting together on Sunday should be about revving you up and getting you ready for the week as you go back out into a world that is spiritually dark.

One of my goals, as a minister, is to show people that religion and Christianity are joyous rather than institutional. I have been "institutional" too much in my life, and it did not bode well for my faith. Experiencing the uplift that comes from teaming up with God has allowed my faith to become stronger.

Remember that God wants you, not just your presence in a church building. God wants you, not just your money in a plate. God wants you, not your hypocritical actions.

I go through days where I am guilty of all three. I am constantly working to give me to Him, so I don't revert back to making religion an institution.

Jarrod Spencer is the minister for the Colby Church of Christ.

High Plains Lions Club

The High Plains Lions Club met at 6:30 p.m. June 22 at the Robert Burnett Memorial Union. Larry Brenn and Roger Hale brought pizza, Norm Whittaker brought cherry cobbler and Sheryl Brenn provided drinks and ice cream. The evening was a celebration of the ending and beginning of a new club year.

President Hale called the Lions to order for the last time of his term. New officers were inducted into their club positions by Past District Gov. Mike Baughn:

President, Justin Burris; First Vice President, Roger Herren; Second Vice President, Mary Hurtt; Secretary, Sheryl Brenn; Treasur-

er, Larry Brenn; Second Year Director, Melinda Morton; First Year Director, Whittaker; Chaplain, Elmer Lawver; Tail Twister, Francis Britton; Lion Tamer, Shawn Carney; Past President, Hale

After the flag salute and invocation by Lawver, the club sang "Happy Birthday" to Whittaker, led by Hurtt. New President Burris introduced his wife Kelli and goddaughter Opal Ann. Sheryl Brenn introduced her guest, Amber Sloan. Hale introduced his guest, Gov. Baughn.

Kayla Sloan gave the club her 10-minute persuasion speech on the dangers of wearing flip-flops. Sloan was one of the high school

forensic students who traveled to the national tournament. Amber said she plans to attend Kansas State University next year, majoring in animal science.

Tail Twister Britton fined Hurtt for wearing flip-flops and asked for volunteers to carry Mary out to her car. Francis then fined every member of the club for any infraction he could think of.

The club discussed possibly starting two branch clubs in the fall. The rest of the meeting was spent planning the Fourth of July free hot dog and watermelon feed.

The Fourth of July Lions Celebration will be at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. The club will have free hot dogs and watermelon before the Kiwanis fireworks display. Serving will start around 6:20 p.m. The Colby Free Press will have its money toss at 7 p.m. There will be entertainment and games for the children. After the food, there will be bingo for prizes. Fireworks will begin at dark.

Senior Progress Center

Friday, July 3, the Senior Progress Center will be closed for Independence Day. There will be no meals served and the county transportation van will not run.

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 10:30 a.m., Wii bowling tournament. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m., exercise; cookie day. **Wednesday:** 10:30 a.m., domino game. **Thursday:** 10 a.m., exercise; 11-11:30 a.m., Fourth of July celebration. **Friday:** center closed.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** smothered steak, mashed potatoes, green beans, pears. **Tuesday:** macaroni and cheese with smokies, California-blend vegetables, watermelon, cookie. **Wednesday:** turkey, sweet potatoes, cook's choice vegetables, mixed fruit with blueberries. **Thursday:** hamburger, tater triangles or tots, cottage cheese salad, cake. **Friday:** closed for Independence Day.

Students honored

Heath Bieker, Blake McLemore and Courtney Ress, all of Colby, earned honors from Kansas State University for their academic performance during the spring 2009 semester.

Students receiving semester honors rank in the top 10 percent of their class within their colleges.

Graduation honors went to Blake McLemore, summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in agriculture, and Deni Wieland, Colby, cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering. Summa cum laude indicates a grade average of 3.95 or higher; and cum laude shows an average of 3.750 to 3.848.



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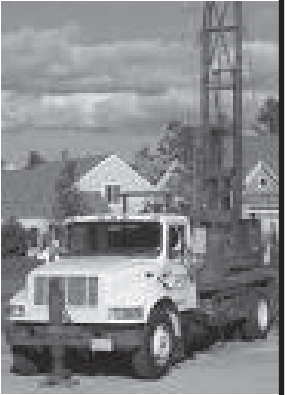
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Monday Evening											June 29, 2009			
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30				
KAKE/ABC	The Bachelorette				Newlyweds		Local	Nightline	Jimmy Kimmel Live					
KBSL/CBS	How I Met Rules		Two Men	Big Bang	CSI: Miami		Local	Late Show-Letterman	Late Late					
KSNK/NBC	Law & Order		Law Order: CI		Dateline NBC		Local	Wimbledon	Tonight Show					
KSAS/FOX	House		Lie to Me		Local									
Cable Channels														
A & E	Intervention		Intervention		Obsessed		The Cleaner		Intervention					
AMC	The Whole Nine Yards				Starsky & Hutch				The Whole Nine Yards					
ANIM	Most Outrageous		Dogs 101		Animal Cops		Most Outrageous		Dogs 101					
BRAVO	New Jersey		Kathy Griffin		Kathy Griffin		Kathy Griffin		NYC Prep					
CMT	Extreme-Home		Can You Duet				Can You Duet		Music Awards					
CNN	Campbell Brown		Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360				Larry King Live					
COMEDY	Daily	Colbert	Ralphie May		Futurama	Futurama	Daily	Colbert	Tosh.0	Martin				
DISC	Dirty Jobs		Swamp Loggers		Swamp Loggers		Dirty Jobs		Swamp Loggers					
DISN	Holes				Wizards	Montana	The Suite	So Raven	Life With	Cory				
E!	Fatal Beauty				Wildest	The Dish	Chelsea	E! News	Chelsea	Adventures				
ESPN	MLB Baseball				Baseball Tonight		SportsCenter		Baseball	NFL Live				
ESPN2	Series of Poker		Series of Poker		Series of Poker		Series of Poker		NASCAR Now					
FAM	Secret-Teen		Make It or Break It		Secret-Teen		The 700 Club		Secret-Teen					
FOOD	Good Eats	Good Eats	Unwrapped	Unwrapped	Diners	Diners	Good Eats	Unwrapped	Unwrapped	Unwrapped				
FX	Ice Age		Ice Age: Melt				Just Married							
HGTV	Property	Property	House	My First	House	For Rent	HGTV Showdown		Property	Property				
HIST	Secrets-Fathers				Beltway Unbuckled				Secrets-Fathers					
LIFE	Reba	Reba	Army Wives		Desperate Housewives	Will	Will	Frasier	Frasier					
MTV	True Life		Run	Run	Run	Run	Run	DJ Fro	Going Out					
NICK	School	SpongeBob	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Lopez	Lopez	The Nanny	The Nanny	Fam. Mat.	Fam. Mat.				
SCI	Star Trek Gen.		Star Trek Gen.		Star Trek Gen.		Gundam 00	Gundam 00	Gurren	Rave				
SPIKE	Star Wars-Phantom		UFC Unleashed		4th and Long		Heat							
TBS	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Name Earl	Name Earl	Engvall	Sex and t	Sex and t	In the Mi				
TCM	American Epic				Greatest Show									
TLC	Jon Kate	Jon Kate	Jon Kate	Jon Kate	Cake Boss	Cake Boss	Jon Kate	Jon Kate	Jon Kate	Jon Kate				
TNT	The Closer		The Closer		Raising the Bar		Wedding Day		Raising the Bar					
TOON	Total	Total	6TEEN	6TEEN	King-Hill	King-Hill	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Chicken	Aqua Teen				
TRAV	Extreme Waterparks		Bite Me-Mike		Anthony Bourdain		Anthony Bourdain		Extreme Waterparks					
TV LAND	Griffith	Griffith	Griffith	Griffith	Griffith	Griffith	Griffith	Griffith	Roseanne	Roseanne				
USA	NCIS		WWE Monday Night Raw		Royal Pains		Royal Pains		Law Order: CI					
VH1	Charm School		Charm School		Goes to Work		Charm School		Goes to Work					
WGN	Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos		WGN News at Nine		Scrubs	Scrubs	The Bob & Tom Show					
Premium Channels														
HBO	Real Time		Shouting Fire: Free Speech		The Dark Knight									
MAX	Foot's Gold				Meet Dave		Zane Sex	Zane Sex	300					
SHOW	3:10 to Yuma				Weeds	Nurse	Weeds	Nurse	Penn	Comedy				

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